Clark, Dorothy J. TRIB-STAR 4-20-69

Early Darwin Prosperity Helped By Boat Builders

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The early prosperity of Darwin, Illinois, dated from 1831 when the land which was held by speculators came into the market by public sale and Darwin Township was rapidly settled.

There had been some development of business interests before this, but the farmers found little demand at home for their surplus crops, and following the example of other settlements began very early to ship their produce down river.

When or by whom the first boat was sent out from Darwin is difficult to learn, for nearly every farmer was involved in the venture.

At first the boats were manufactured on the banks of the Wabash River by the farmers who used them, but later it became a thriving business to the more qualified craftsmen to build boats for a living and sell to the other less gifted farmers. Finished boats were sold at a dollar per linear foot.

The plan was to take a fine poplar or sycamore tree, and hew it in rectangular shape about 18 by 24 inches. This was split through the middle leaving strips about 12 by 18 inches and of lengths varying from 55 to 75 feet. These were the "gunwales" and formed the main strength of the structure. The heart side was placed outward and on the inner lower corner was cut a "gain" large enough to allow the two-inch flooring to rest in it and come to the level of the bottom of the gunwale.

The widths of the boats was from 15 to 20 feet and was established by cross pieces framed in the gunwales at moderate distances apart.

Dorothy Clark

Lengthwise the boat was further strengthened by "streamers" running parallel with the gunwales about four feet apart. Upon this framework, securely framed and fastened together, a flooring of two-inch planks was laid double, pinned with wooden pins and heavy nails.

The boat thus far constructed was bottom side up, and after being well caulked, the difficulty was to turn it over to be finished. The practice was to choose a location on the bank of the river convenient for launching, and when the work reached this stage, to turn it on the land, though the more skillful turned them in the water.

If it was done on the land, the neighborhood was invited, and all joined in lifting the one side of the wooden leviathan and letting it fall on brush heaps and a multitude of hoop-poles which helped break its fall. This was a risky business and sometimes great damage resulted, so the other way was preferred.

This was to place a temporary board railing on one side and the ends. Against this an embankment of dirt was placed on the boat, and thus prepared, it was launched into the stream and towed by yawls into the deep water.

The side of the boat weighted with dirt was placed across the current up the stream and while held in this position, the embankment of dirt was broken in two places to allow the water to run over the top. The weight of the dirt held one side considerably lower than the other and on being broken down the current got such hold of it as to turn it right under the stream. Great care was necessary to prevent the embankment from being broken prematurely, and for those near at hand.

When turned, it was hauled to shore by a cable previously fastened to it and then who managed the turning to escape a serious wetting by leaping in a small boat kept completed. The gunwales were trimmed off at the prow to give the boat the proper "rake"; sides about four feet high were added by nailing clapboards on studding framed in the sills or gunwales, and then the whole was roofed over with boards projecting over the sides to shed the water perfectly, and rounded from one side to the other, the center being about 5½ to 6 feet high.

About six feet of the stern was boarded off for a cabin, provided with bunks on either side and a stone fireplace with "cat and clay" chimney. About three feet of the front end was left enclosed to prevent the greater damage of snags, and when provided with sweeps on each side and a steering-oar in the rear, the craft was complete.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Pilots Hired

These boats differed in size and would carry from two to 5 thousand bushels of grain. At first each man was his own pilot, but as the business increased there were those whose frequent trips down the river gave their judgement a money value, and providing themselves with published charts of the river, they set up as pilots.

These men were hired to navigate the boats and were a trip and later, according to paid at first from $50 to $75 the length of the boat, a dollar per linear foot.

From three to eight hands were employed as crew at about $30 per trip, all employees being boarded on the trip, and all paying the entire expense of their return. The whole cost of such a trip including boats was from $300 to $400, though a part of this was recovered by the sale of the boat in New Orleans, which cut the net cost by some $25 to $75. If the boat was made of carefully selected lumber, and the market was favorable, the cost of the boat was sometimes realized.

The quickest trips from Darwin to New Orleans were one in 14 days, and one in 16 days, the average being somewhat longer and depended upon the weather. The start was generally made upon the spring flood and if the nights were clear and light, no snags were encountered, and no delays occasioned by "tying up" to the bank at night as a matter of prudence, the quickest time of 14 days could be attained.

But such a favorable combination of circumstances were seldom known. Accomplished by men unfamiliar with the sciences of navigation, these trips were frequently marred by serious personal danger and financial embarrassment.

After steamboats began to ply the Mississippi and Ohio the danger of being run down by them was very great in

Ts SEP 2 3 1973

Woman's Club Organized At Marshall, Ill., in 1898

Clark, Dorothy

Ts SEP 2 3 1973

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Community Affairs File

The first minutes book of the Woman's Club of Marshall, Ill., was recently given to the Historical Museum as part of the history of the Wabash Valley. This 75-year-old book begins with the first meeting held Sept. 27, 1898, when the small group of ladies met at the home of Mrs. Alice Farlan "for purposes of organizing a Woman's Club."

There were twelve charter members including the newly-appointed officers: Mrs. Schwanecke, pres.; the hostess, Mrs. Harlan, vice pres.; Miss Emma Ewalt, treas.;; Miss Mattie Mayer, sec'y.; Mesdames Clara Harlan, Walter Cole, Trueman Booth, Rose, Handy, and the Misses Stephenson, Gertrude Shaw and Fannie Andrews.

Miss Gertrude Shaw was selected as leader of the philanthropic committee. The group decided to study foreign countries beginning with England, and to consult with Mrs. Shoaff of Danville, Ill., about the doings of the club there.

There was obviously a great deal of enthusiasm for the new club, for ten more members joined after the first meeting. They included Mesdames Ruth LeGore, Martha Cole, Yant, Burnett, Anna Lycan, Hogue, Fred Keifer, and Misses Lillie Marvin, Anna Mitchell and Scholfield.

In October, 1898, the club met at Mrs. Booth's home to hear Mrs. Shoaff tell about the Woman's Club of Danville, Ill. This time there were thirteen new members: Mesdames Dr. O. Mitchell, Gorham, George Baird, and Misses Carrie Archer, Cora Holler, Clara Schwanecke, Clarine Grenough, Laura Arbuckle, Lucy Quick, Mayme Hughes, Cora Baird and Flora Wallace.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

Two seeks later the group met in the evening and adopted by-laws. They decided to meet twice a month, "three dissenting voices" would exclude a prospective member, and if a member missed three meetings "without good cause" they were automatically out. The first program, given by Mrs. Handy, was "A Resume of English History from 446 to 1066" and "A Letter From Southampton" plus "Impressions of London Today." It sounds very much as if this member had recently traveled to England and welcomed the opportunity to tell about her journey.

In November the club set the minimum age at 17 years. Tardy members were charged the small fine of five cents.

After Christmas, 1898, the social committee gave its first reception at the home of Mrs. Dr. O. Mitchell.

The year 1899 began the study of Shakespeare. In May, the officers were re-elected but the treasurer declined so the secretary took over her duties also. If a member failed to give her assigned program she was fined one dollar.

At the turn of the century the club had 25 members. The secretary wrote very brief minutes, and statements such as "business transacted" and "program as per calendar" tell us very little. By April, 1900, they were studying "Russian Wealth."

There was a notation that Clara Harlan (Mrs. Will) died March 13, 1901. Mrs. Walter Cole resigned as president; Gertrude Shaw became secretary and the handwriting became larger and more legible. In 1901 the club studied French history.

In June, 1901, the club decided to meet Saturday afternoons instead of Friday evenings at the homes in alphabetical order. They also accepted an invitation to attend the Lawn Fete given by

Continued On Page 15, Col. 6

the Afternoon Club. Colonial History was the study through the rest of 1901.

In May, 1902, there was sixteen dollars in the treasury, but the club decided to give $25 to help build the cemetery walk, and Mrs. Foster was appointed solicitor. There was also a report on "chickens running at large."

In 1902-03 the secretary's minutes changed from Miss Shaw's heavy hand to Miss Cora Baird's dainty script. In January, 1903, the club brought in their first outside speaker, Prof. W. M. Evans, whose topic was "Lowell" at the Congregational church. The club asked a committee of four men, William Shaw, Mr. Schwanecke, William Harlan and Ed Booth, to supervise the building of the cemetery walk. Plans and specifications for this walk are included in the book. Funds were raised, the walk constructed and paid for by the ladies for $575.32.

New officers elected in May, 1903, were Miss Nellie Stephens, president; Miss Fannie Andrew, vice president, Mrs. Sel Hanly, treasurer, and Mrs. Frank Foster, secretary. The minute book turned to pencil scribbling and difficult to read. The club voted to have every other meeting "of a social nature." They began to have "readings" in addition to the educational papers and piano selections "followed by lots of talk and good things to eat."

The February, 1904 meeting was held "after a sleigh ride and oyster supper." At this meeting they voted to build a drinking fountain "with funds on hand." The building of a concrete sidewalk from the city limits to the depot was discussed.

The 1905-06 club year began the club's involvement in town affairs. They held meetings to discuss such issues as the great need for a music teacher in the schools and how to go about establishing a library for the community.

The old minutes book ends in 1907. New names added were Behner, Bell, Denney, Duncan, Janney, Prevo, Purdum, Warriner, Moran and Hamill.

A newspaper clipping told of a typical club meeting at the home of Mrs. H. M. Janney with 30 members attending. "A smelling contest was the feature of the day. Twenty bottles containing perfumes, extracts and drugs of various kinds were set out before them and all kinds of fun over the confusion it caused. One lady declared that there was only one kind of perfumery she did know and that was heliotrope, but there was, of course no helio on the table, and she had a bottle of help at her nose while she was talking. Mrs. Cook won the prize. Then each was required to draw some object in Mrs. Janney's guest book. A pleasant afternoon followed the dutch lunch."

All of which leads to the conclusion of this writer that women's clubs are very little different now than they were 75 years ago!

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

First Edgar Co. Orchard Planted By Daniel Lane

Ts AUG 25 1974

Illinois Co-Edgar

By DOROTHY J. CLARK Ts AUG 25 1974

The first orchard planted in Edgar County was set out in 1817 by Daniel Lane, of Massachusetts. This orchard was of seedling yearling trees grown from seed taken from Mrs. Vandeburg's orchard at Vincennes, Ind., and planted in Terre Haute, in the fall of 1815. Two years later, Mr. Lane came to Edgar County, and replanted the young trees in his new orchard located east of Paris about three miles.

Some 63 years later, when the Edga r County history was written, the trees were reported in good condition, bearing almost every year, and "looked as though they would yet outlive more than another generation."

The original orchard plat contained 178 trees. The largest of the original trees, when 63 years old, measured seven feet and six inches in circumference, one foot from the ground; another measured six feet nine inches, and several others more than six feet.

A golden willow tree at the same place, and supposed to have been planted about the same time, was in good health and measured 11 feet and six inches around the trunk anywhere six feet above the ground.

Mr. Lane's orchard produced fruit for a number of years, until a better variety of trees was introduced and began bearing fruit. His apples were especially adapted to cider - making. He possessed a recipe for cider that preserved its sweetness and purity for years. Even his most intimate friends could not persuade him to reveal the secret.

DOROTHY CLARK

He used to argue that seedlings were about as good as any, and the most profitable, but when the fine fruit drove him out of the market, he abandoned the idea, and, about 1842, was employed by Mr. B. O. Curtis to graft a few hundred seedlings which stood in his garden. Mr. Curtis said that while he was working there, Mr. Lane frequently brought out a pitcher of his excellent cider, remarking that the "Curtises could beat him with apples, but he guessed he could beat them on cider."

Some of these early apples were called "Pumpkin Sweet," or "Lane's Sweet," and "Lane's Redstreak."

Augustine Boland, from Connecticut, was one of the very earliest settlers of Edgar County. He planted the second orchard on the farm afterward owned by M. Step. He soon after planted another orchard on the land later occupied by G. W. Kimble. From this last orchard, in 1829, he gathered five bushels of apples, and the following season it produced considerable fruit for market.

The first nursery in Edgar County, and in the state of Illinois, was planted in 1818 by Joseph Curtis, on the north arm of the Grand Prairie, four miles east of Paris. Mr. Curtis was a native of New Jersey, but had moved with his father to Manchester, Ohio, raising new varieties from seed, collecting and testing the best varieties that could then be found. He also

Continued On Page 6, Col. 2.

Community Affairs File

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Dorothy Clark

Ts AUG 25 1974

Continued From Page 4.

made numerouse experiments in grafting and planting.

One of his experiments in grafting resulted in a most valuable discoveries. The method then was to graft and bud the stocks above the ground. But, on one occasion, having run out of stock, and having a few slips he decdied to inset them in roots. The success of the methods revolutionized this part of the nurseryman's business. His method was learned by the best informed nurserymen of the East, and they in turn sold the knowledge for $100 per lesson.

Mr. Curtis collected many varieties of fruit trees in Ohio, New Jersey and other states, and brought them with him to Fort Harrison, on the Wabash River in 1816, where they were planted, making two season's growth, and in the autumn of 1817, removed to his new farm in Edgar County, Illinois.

Some of the varieties of winter apples included: Janette, yellow pippin, Milam, Smith cider, sweet Rhode Island greening, winter queen, Hannah, Newtown Pippin, Newtown Spitzenberg, large Romanite, little Romanite, winter ,white, black gilly-flower, lady-fingers, hard red, Shaker red and Priestly.

His autumn apples included: Rambo, fall winesap, fall pippin, Harper's sweet, and Taylor. Summer apples were Sweet harvest, early Pennock and sour harvest.

Varieties of pear trees included: Pound, early sugar, mammoth (from the greatest mammoth-pear near Vincennes, Ind.) and the harbest.

Cherry trees included the Black Morello and Virginia red. He brought Orange and-Italain quince trees, the large damson plum, the large yellow free peach, and the White cape and black cape grape.

In 1879 few of these trees were living, but those surviging measured more than eight feet in circumference, over 40 feet in height and spread their branches in a circumefrence of 180 feet, the largest apple trees in the county.

Among the early pioneers who planted orchards in the eastern part of Edgar County were R. Blackman, Elijah Austin, Col. J. Mayo, John Stratton, Col. J. M. Blackburn, Gen. J. Sandford, William Murphy, Laban Burr and E. Pursell.

Col. Blackburn had one of the best orchards of grafted varieties and suckers from trees that were known to have produced good fruit. He was the originator of the red Hughes crab, the best cider apple known in this country.

Near Paris, Samuel Vance, who laid out the village in 1823, planted an orchard of seedlings, from the nursery of William Archer, of Clark County, Ill. Smith Shaw planted an orchard in what is now the eastern part of Paris. Others who planted orchards near Paris were Gen. M. K. Alexander, William Means and Adriel Stout. William Shrader, John Shrader and Joseph Hite were the first to plant orchards in the sothwestern part of Edgar County. Mr. Hite brought the May cherry from Kentucky in 1827 . . . it survived when all other varieties were killed in the severe winter of 1855-56.

Community Affairs File

Historically Speaking

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Ts DEC 7 1975

"Way down upon the Wabash such land was never known,
If Adam had passed over it, the soil he'd surely own;
He'd think it was the garden he'd played in when a boy,
And straight pronouced it Eden in the State of El-a-noy.

She's bounded by the Wabash, the Ohio and the Lakes.
She has crawfish in her swampy lands, and milksick and the shakes.
But these are slight diversions and take not from the joy
Of living in this garden land, the State of El-a-noy.

Then move your family westward, good health you will enjoy,
And rise to wealth and honor in the State of El-a-noy."

According to Rachael Lundeen in her paper on Early Illinois immigrants, "in its time, the Illinois frontier had become the most magnetic area in the world."

Archaelogists had located artifacts of a prehistoric race who called this area their home possibly 10,000 years before the coming of the French missionaries and explorers.

Its mighty rivers — the Mississippi, the Ohio and the Illinois and their tributaries — Lake Michigan of the great chain of lakes, all had assisted early man in reaching prehistoric Illinois. This area had been a meeting place, perhaps a crossroads of early civilization, and now these same waterways were to become the highways for a new migration and settlement. This fertile soil of the great untamed prairie, the rich bottom lands and the choice wooded areas had become the dream of millions of new invaders — the immigrants.

The lure for this new frontier was very great, and many of the early settlers were second and third generation Americans who had come to the New England and Southern Colonies before 1776. Sometimes they are referred to as "Colonists" while those who came later were called "Immigrants."

Experienced in the techniques of overcoming the wilderness, these pioneer frontiersmen and settlers pushed northward, some over the Wilderness Road of Kentucky, others westward over the National Road, and many floated flatboats down the Ohio River. Upon reaching southern Illionis, trails were followed into the wooded area and civilization was pushed a little closer to the great prairie.

Much has been written concerning the mobility of the American-born settlers as compared to the foreign-born ones. During the cycle of successive stages of frontier development, some historians discovered a pattern which often repeated itself. The skilled trapper and Indian trader arrived in the area first, followed by an experienced frontiersman carrying rifle, ax, knife and a few cooking utensils. He cleared a small place, built a crude shelter, planted a small amount of corn, located drinking water, and made a few trails in his search for food. When game became scarce it was easy to move on. His temporary home was taken over by some pioneer farmer who brought his family, more tools, equipment, seed to plant, and a few domestic animals. He expanded the clearing into several acres, enlarged or rebuilt the dwelling, planted corn, oats and wheat and developed the useful trails into roads.

But this settler needed money to finish the payments on his land and for taxes. Successive crop failures might force him to sell and move on. In turn, his location might be occupied by a permanent farmer who had money to buy the land and to make improvements. The pattern allowed ten years each for the frontiersman and for the pioneer farmer, but there was no time limit for the permanent farmer. Historians discuss the many facets of this pattern and if it had really ever existed.

The pioneer method of farming was very simple. The felled trees were burned on the site as the easiest method of clearing land for crops. Lack of fertilizers and use of crop rotation soon exhausted

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over

the fertility of the soil. When good crops could no longer be raised the farmer moved on to a new area.

Later as the ever present wave of foreign born immigrants hurried the westward movement of civilization into the Illinois frontier as well as across the continent, we find that immigration had become a natural experience.

The immigrants of early French villages of Kaskaskia and Prairie du Rocher were mostly from New Orleans and Mobile and decidedly more relaxed in their way of life than their neighbors in Cahokia who had migrated from Canada.

Shawneetown on the Ohio River was the main point of embarkation for settlers wishing to continue their journey to points west and north. Here the Salt Licks had been known by wild life and Indians for generations.

In 1825, the opening of the Erie Canal offered a water-route between the Hudson River and Lake Erie. Early settlers from New England and New York used this waterway to the Illinois frontier through the Great Lakes. During 1835 some 100,000 immigrants used this waterway. During this period nearly four million acres of land were sold to immigrants settling in Illinois.

The thick, tough, interwoven roots of the prairie grass did not give way to the plow of the pioneer. A special breaking plow proved successful in slicing the matted sod. With the news of this invention, over 300,000 settlers reached the great prairie during the year 1830. Vandalia, the second capitol of Illinois from 1820-39, overlooked the Kaskaskia River in a beautiful wooded area in Fayette County.

Community Affairs File

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Historically Speaking

2-13-77-T.S.

2-13-77-T.S.

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

History of Wabash Valley

At the close of the War of 1812, the favorite site for immigration was the Wabash Valley, and settlers from all parts of the country excited by the descriptions of those whom military duty had brought here, came flocking to this region even before the Indian troubles were settled.

The first to reach the present location of York, Illinois, was Thomas Handy and his family. Natives of New York, they came via the Allegheny, Ohio and Wabash rivers to Vincennes.

This long, tedious journey was made in a keel boat, and much of the way not only in danger of perils by water but on land as well.

After a short stay at Vincennes, they chose what is now York township for their future home and late in the spring of 1814 landed on the site of York village. In Section 18, east of Mill Creek, they constructed a temporary shelter over a log with brush-wood covered with bark, and under this the family could sleep. Cooking was done in the open air.

Standing guard against Indian attack, the rest of the family put up a log cabin. A short distance north, a son, John Handy, put up another cabin. Since they were legally squatters, they made no great improvements until the land sale was held.

The next settler to come to York was William Hogue, a native of Virginia. He also made the river trip, pushing his boat up the river, and arriving at York early in 1815.

Hogue cleared a small patch of ground from which he was able to get enough food, with the abundant game, to feed his family. He kept as far from the rest of the settlement as possible, making no permanent improvements, and soon went to Terre Haute. His brother, David Hogue, came to York in 1816.

John and Joseph Richardson, brothers from New York, came to York in 1816. Chester Fitch and his family also were with this party.

Jonathan Lindley, native of North Carolina, along with three of his brothers and several other families settled in Crawford County. John Welsh came from Kentucky and became the second sheriff of the county.

The Indians who had enlisted in the British cause in the War of 1812, did not comprehend that the war was over. Although they made no organized raids on white settlements, they did continue to attack isolated communities.

The white settlers were in a constant state of nerves, and many an anxious night was spent expecting an Indian attack.

William Hogue, who came to the Wabash Valley in 1815, was a great hunter with previous experience with the Indians. While out hunting one day he became aware that an Indian on the east side of the Wabash river was trying to "get the drop" on him. Climbing a tree, the Indian caught sight of him and fired, knocking the bark off the tree. While the Indian was reloading his gun, he exposed his back for an instant, and Hogue fired and killed him.

On another occasion, while out hunting deer with his son, he had more Indian troubles. He had shot a deer and placed it with his son on a horse to be taken home.

Following his son a short distance to see that he was safely on the way home, he spied an Indian skulking in the woods, evidently following the boy. To see was to act, and in another moment the Indian was stretched out lifeless.

Hogue preferred killing Indians to killing game, and when the Indians were gone from the valley he went to Terre Haute and gave up killing Indians for sport.

Indians, principally of the Kickapoo tribe, were found in great numbers in Clark County, Illinois. They came regularly to hunt and make sugar. York Village was a favorite trading place where they exchanged furs and skins for ammunition, metal trinkets, drygoods, etc. By 1830, these Indians stopped their visits and were not seen in the area again.

Up to the year 1817, the nearest point the York settlers could obtain goods, groceries or mail was at Fort Harrison on the Wabash river, a few miles above Terre Haute, a journey of 25 miles.

Vincennes was the nearest point south with its three or four frontier stores. The only means of communication with either of these points was by the river, or over blazed trails easily traveled only on horseback.

The situation compelled the majority of the settlers, even if they had the money for such pioneer luxuries, to depend upon their own resources.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Community Affairs File

Marshall celebrates 150th anniversary

'Handsomest site' caught Col. Archer's eye

Clark, Dorothy
Marshall (Ill.)

T'S SEP 15 1985

Community Affairs File

Historically speaking

Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Marshall, Ill., celebrates its 150th anniversary this month.

The town's founder, Col. William Beaty Archer, was the most prominent and influential man in the state. The third of nine children of Zachariah and Jane (Kilgore) Archer, Archer was born in 1793 in Scott County, Kentucky.

His father was born in 1752 in County Down, Ireland, and came to America in 1772 with his parents, Samuel and Jane Archer, in a sailing ship which landed at Philadelphia.

At 24, Zachariah enlisted in the Revolutionary War in 1776. Following his military service he settled in Scott County, Kentucky, and married in 1789. A weaver by trade, he depended upon farming for a living. In 1801, he moved from Kentucky to purchase a farm in Warren County, Ohio.

After 15 years, the family sold its land and invested the proceeds in the "Wabash Country" of the Illinois Territory. In 1816 the three oldest sons of Zachariah were sent in a keelboat down the Ohio River and up the Wabash River to locate suitable land on which to establish a new home for the family who would make the journey west in 1817.

The three Archers who set out on this important mission were Charles R., 25, William B., 23, and Jesse K., 19. The exact date of their departure is unknown, but it is presumed they left in the spring and landed at the settlement of York.

Located on the west bank of the Wabash River near what later became the southeast corner of York Township and Clark County, Ill., York had settlers as early as 1814. At that time it was the most northern village on the Illinois side of the Wabash River, the landing place for all new settlers bound north or northwest.

The Archer brothers located three tracts of land of 160 acres each about six miles due north of York. Each tract cornered on the lot where the Block School House was built many years later.

Zachariah's sons showed excellent judgment in selecting this land. The location is still considered choice land of the county and borders part on the first road laid out north of Palestine. This road became part of the Vincennes and Chicago state road and a stage route from Vincennes to Chicago.

In 1817 William B. Archer entered land adjacent to his father, a half mile east of the Block School House site and three miles due south of the present village of Darwin.

Jesse Archer returned to Ohio to pilot the family to their new home in Illinois. All the household goods were loaded in wagons, and the mother, two sons, Stephen and Samuel, and one daughter, Hannah, 6, started overland, driving with them a number of cattle.

The father, Zachariah, with one son, Jesse, and two daughters, Jane and Elizabeth, accompanied by Jacob Harlan, embarked in a keelboat down the Ohio and up the Wabash. The river journey was accomplished only after the most trying difficulties were overcome.

The river was very low, and time and again the men had to drag the boat over sandbars and through shallow places. On reaching Vincennes, however, the river began to rise rapidly, making it difficult to make headway against the strong current.

The overland travelers reached their destination some weeks ahead of the river party. After making the family comfortable in a double log cabin, they began to worry at the long delayed arrival of the rest of the family. They soon arrived safely, and because of the high water were able to float their boat overland almost to the cabin door.

William B. Archer's long and useful career in public office began as Clerk of the Circuit Court as well as the Commissioner's Court. He married Elizabeth Harlan, eldest daughter of George and Ester (Eulass) Harlan. Their only child was a daughter who married Woodford D. Dulaney.

Sept. 22, 1835, Col. W. B. Archer announced the laying out of the Town of Marshall and the sale of lots. In a circular notice he wrote: "This is a new town laid off on the National Road where the Vincennes and Chicago State Road crosses the former on Sec. 13 T11N, R12W, in Clark County and is situated 55 miles north of Vincennes, 16 miles from York, and 10 miles from Darwin, south of Paris 15 miles and 50 miles from Danville, 16 miles west of Terre Haute.

"It is decidedly the handsomest site for a town between Terre Haute and Vandalia, surrounded by good second-rate land, a sufficient amount of timber, and the best stone for building, and it may be truly said that no point in this section of the country has proven more healthy.

"The north and south road has been opened by the proprietors from Big Creek to Walnut Prairie, and when a permanent road shall be made, it will not vary from the present line. Mills are convenient ... "

The land owned by Joseph Duncan and William B. Archer was platted Oct. 3 and recorded Oct. 17, 1835. The town was named "Marshall" in honor of John Marshall, fourth Chief Justice of the United States from 1801 to 1835 and regarded as the greatest jurist this country had produced.

Joseph Duncan, Archer's associate, served as Governor of Illinois from 1834 to 1839. Col. Archer served 16 years in the Illinois Senate and House of Representatives, two of those years with Abraham Lincoln. He actively promoted many state roads and railroads.

When the Black Hawk War broke out in 1832, Archer recruited the first company of Mounted Volunteers at Darwin, Ill., and gained the military title of colonel. When Illinois called for volunteers for the Mexican War, Archer raised a company of 75 men and left from Marshall in wagons on June 6, 1846.

Because of his activities on the State Board of Canal Commissioners, Chicago renamed Saganaskee Road, one its principal thoroughfares, in Archer's honor. It became known as Archer Avenue and Archer Road extending from State Street in Chicago to Joliet, Ill.

Again elected Circuit Clerk in 1848, he served until 1852. This was his last public office and closed a career of 33 years of almost continuous service as a county and state official.

Archer died Aug. 9, 1870, at the home of his sister, Jane Bartlett, at the corner of Seventh and Ash streets. He is buried in the Walnut Prairie Cemetery.

Shading history

Clark, Dorothy

Mulberry tree stands as landmark in Hutsonville

Ts APR 23

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

The Wabash River always has been famous for the many sycamore trees which lined its banks in Indian days. But an enormous mulberry tree which flourished not far from the river's edge in the little river town of Hutsonville, Ill., became an historic landmark.

In later years, this tree shaded the back door of the home of James Oliver Fesler, born in 1837, and his wife, Matilda, born in 1840, always known as "Uncle Jim" and "Aunt Tildy."

These early settlers were the grandparents of Terre Haute attorney John K. Fesler who lived in this house from 1907 to 1910.

According to Fesler, "The woodshed, or what we called the smokehouse," was filled with plunder which would be considered valuable antiques today.

"I remember seeing a lantern," he said, "with a candle in the middle with holes punched all around the sides to let the light out and a ring in the top to carry it with. I know that this lantern must have been very old, but I was too young to appreciate it."

Tradition has it that the Indians used to camp under this tree and pick its luscious black berries which they mixed with honey from a nearby bee tree. This made a tasty spread for their corn cakes much as we would use jam today.

By 1860 this tree had grown very tall. One day the main trunk was struck by lightning and shattered almost to the stump. The next year three new shoots, called water sprouts, came up from this stump and grew into whips.

The Civil War began that year, and Grandma Fesler's brothers, Thomas and James Farmer, enlisted in Lincoln's army. Before they left for the war, they went out to the tree and twisted the three whips around each other thinking they might continue to grow. When the war was over, the brothers returned to find the braided mulberry tree had grown considerably.

It was nearly 40 years later when Attorney Fesler first saw the tree. By that time the twisted whips had grown to a diameter of 18 inches each. It made a very curious looking tree, but had continued to send out limbs which produced mulberries.

Fifty years later the tree was still very much alive and producing fruit. No one knows how many tons of mulberries had been produced through the years.

Attorney Fesler would take his camera along on his annual pilgrimages to Hutsonville and record the status of the then 150-year-old tree.

His grandmother told the story many times of the so-called "Battle of Hutsonville" which took place during the Civil War. It seems that the grandparents were Northern Democrats and followers of Stephen A. Douglas. They were very much opposed to Abe Lincoln who rode through their county in his law practice.

People took their politics very seriously in those days. A Democrat wouldn't speak to a Republican. A Republican wouldn't walk on the same side of the street with a Democrat.

James Oliver Fesler, a vigorous outspoken man who had lived in Hutsonville all his life, gained many enemies because of his strong opposition to Lincoln's conduct of the war.

Word came by the grapevine that the "night riders" were coming to "rock" Fesler's house. "Rocking" a house was done by throwing large stones at the house, through the windows and against the roof. A house that had been "rocked" was left in a sorry and dilapidated condition.

Mrs. Fesler sent for her relatives to help defend the home with their muzzle-loading guns. All the relatives posted themselves around the house that night, ready to do battle if necessary.

It was the tomato canning season, and primitive canning methods sometimes resulted in cans blowing up. So it was that night when all was quiet and the guard on the alert. One of the fermenting tomato cans began to hiss and blew up to the ceiling.

Believing it to be a signal that the enemy was approaching, the guards began firing into the darkness. Much later the cause of the explosion was discovered, which led to much joking and family fun. The incident became known in the Fesler family as the Battle of Hutsonville, the only Civil War battle without a single casualty.

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Darwin was early Clark seat

TS JAN 24 1993 (18) ★ Clark, Dorothy

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star's women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column since 1956. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Clark County was the 15th county formed in the state of Illinois.

Joseph Shaw, John Chenoweth and Samuel Ashmore were elected county commissioners at the election conducted April 26, 1819.

They named the county seat "Aurora," even though there was not a town, village or trading post at the site in 1821 when Shaw and Chenoweth met to draw a town plat and designate the locations for the main street and public square.

No courthouse ever was erected, and court was conducted in a 12-foot by 14-foot log house. It later was used by Judge Stockwell as a corn crib and still later as a stable.

The first sale of town lots occurred in August 1819. Septer Patrick, who later became a town resident (and local doctor) purchased the first lot ever sold in the new county. It cost $20. A total of 37 lots were sold.

The county built a jail 12-feet by 18-feet, two stories high, of round logs with chinked and daubed cracks. The estray law of that period stated that anyone taking up a stray animal must deliver it to the county seat and put it in the estray pen.

Colonel Archer built a strong, substantial structure 30-foot square, with white walnut posts 6 feet high and 8 inches square, sunk into the ground 3 feet.

The county also erected a whipping post, but it only was used once. A man was tied to the post and whipped for stealing a hog.

Aurora was thought to be the best site for a county seat as it had the finest landing, navigable year round on the Wabash River. It was about two miles north of Darwin, but not a stone is left to tell of its history or existence.

In January 1824, by Act of the Illinois Legislature, the county seat was ordered moved to Darwin, then known as McClure's Bluff, where John McClure had a ferry across the Wabash River. This year would be the ferry's 172nd birthday.

John Chenoweth was crier of the sale of town lots. The old county commissioner records show that John Richardson was authorized to purchase 10 gallons of whiskey to be served on the day of the sale.

Either because of or in spite of the free booze, 34 lots were sold at the first sale with prices ranging from $30 to $111. They were bare lots in a town site without a single building. Those who had bought lots in Aurora were given credit on lots in Darwin.

The little town flourished, and became important. Buildings were built, the population increased, and various industries flourished. The trading area went for miles in all directions. As far west as Effingham, and north to Charleston and Danville.

Farmers drove stock and wagoned their corn and wheat long distances to exchange for salt, iron and other supplies.

For five years, town lots in Darwin were worth more than those in Chicago.

Darwin became a rival of Terre Haute for the river trade, but not for long.

The jail and estray pen were moved to Darwin in 1823. After the jail burned in 1830, a contract for a new jail was let to the lowest bid of $495 in December 1832.

As early as March 1824, the county commissioners ordered "that bids be received for erecting a house to hold court in." Specifications called for a building 25 feet long in the clear, of hewn oak logs, lap, shingle roof, two windows in front, one window in the rear, one-and-a-half stories high, plank floor and rough plank stairs.

The windows downstairs were to have 12 lights each, the upstairs windows to have six lights, and the cracks "were to be chinked and plastered in a workmanlike manner." Louis Kibby received the contract for $600.

The first court conducted at Darwin was in 1823 in John McClure's tavern. The next was at John Harlan's house, and after that at the new courthouse.

Warden & Wooster opened the first store in a cabin fronting the river, north of the Harlan residence. They were traders and came in by boat and stayed about a year. They were succeeded by John and James Waters who bought the farmers' grain and produce and shipped the grain downriver to New Orleans, sending up to a dozen boats in a season. About this time, Darwin became an important distribution point.

James and Harry Ross came to Terre Haute and built up a thriving business handling immense quantities of grain. They built a pork-packing business that they sold out to Allen Sackrider, who developed the commission and distributing business with three or four steamboats unloading at one time.

James Anderson built his tannery about 1829. Other early manufacturing interests included the distillery of the Patrick brothers built in 1822 on the site of a large log building where they bought grain and made it into whiskey. They shipped large quantities down river, continuing in business for seven years with a capacity rate of two barrels a day.

The first sawmill and grist mill combined was built by Leroy Cork on the river bank. Run by steam, it burned twice and was rebuilt.

Because Darwin's prosperity depended on its success as a distributing point, the building of the National Road foretold its doom.

The county seat was moved to Marshall in June 1838. The building of the Vandalia Railroad in 1870 struck a staggering blow from which Darwin never recovered.

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Clark Co. offered settlers plenty

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* Clark, Dorothy

Historically speaking

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By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

Clark County, Ill., was originally both prairie and woodland. On the eastern border of the state, it is bounded on the north by Edgar and Coles counties, on the east by the Indiana line and the Wabash River, on the south by Crawford County, and on the west by Cumberland and Coles counties.

Containing 10 full and eight fractional townships, a total area of about 513 square miles, Clark County has rolling prairies, some rather flat, in the western portion, with more broken prairies in the eastern part, especially in the Wabash bluffs, where it becomes hilly with steep ridges along the small streams.

The level of the highlands ranges from a few feet above the level of high water in the Wabash, 125 to 150 feet. Principal streams in the western part of Clark County are North Fork (of the Embarras) which empties into the Embarras River in eastern Jasper County; and Hurricane Creek which discharges into the Wabash near the southeastern corner of the county.

In the eastern part of the county are Big Creek and two or three small creeks which also empty into the Wabash. North Fork runs through a broad flat valley between bluffs of drift clays.

Early state geological surveys reported sand, gravel, clay, with large boulders of granite, syenite, trap, porphyry, quartzite, and nuggets of native copper and galena. Early oil wells were disappointing, but artesian water was plentiful.

Perrin's History Of Crawford & Clark Counties, Ill., published in 1883, devoted several pages to findings of sandstone, limestone, coal and white clay.

Indian mounds were plentiful in Clark County, about 30 extended along the Wabash River from Darwin to below York, and then into Crawford County. They ranged from 10 to 60 feet in diameter, and from two to 15 feet high. The largest mound near York, 1 1/4 miles from the river, was explored and stone hatchets, fragments of earthware, arrowheads, flints, etc., were removed.

Near Rock Hill Church, on Union Prairie, Jonathan Hogue was digging a cellar and some post-holes when he discovered three stone-walled graves about two feet below the surface. Each contained the perfect skeleton of an adult in a sitting posture facing the sunrise. Other graves were found with the skeletons in a kneeling position, all facing the east.

With all the advantages of rich soil, timber, water, etc., it's puzzling why so many Clark County people chose to leave this abundance and move westward during the Gold Rush days. Stock-raising was profitable, corn grew tall, orchards, pure water, and chills and fevers were only found along the stagnant waterways.

Clark County was slow to get railroads, and this was a period of stagnation, but after the railroad era arrived, emigrants poured in, land increased in value, farms thrived everywhere, towns and villages sprang up, which brought in schools and churches, and this brought prosperity.

As the county history stated, "she is grid-ironed with railroads and sieved with telegraphs, and the products of her fields reach a hundred marts."

The list of Clark County residents who went overland with oxteams, mules or horses in 1849 includes: William B. Hodge, Aaron Ball, Tom and William McGriff, Daniel, David, Moses, Samuel and Thomas Dolson, Austin Vincent Handy, Merritt Fears, Alf and James Rardin, James, Jacob and Samuel Doty, Bertie, Edward and John F. Richardson.

Also, George Fitch, Henry Holaday, James Hamilton, George R. Gibson, William and Reuben Prevo, Dr. Montague, Henry Clark and brother, John Crouch, Adam Spenny, Joe Petri, Monroe Sherman, Mr. Whitlocke and Mr. Reynolds.

They were followed in 1850 by Clark County men: Perry Marvin, Lyman Geer, Martin Puley, French Tousley, John and William Lake, George and Robert McKain, Dr. Samuel McNary, Dr. William H. McNary, Thomas Alexander, Adam Brown, Warren Bartlett, Charley Miller and Rober Archer.

Also, William Crouch, Daniel Dosier, Thomas Towell, John Griffith, James Brooks, Joe and William Howe, Robert Lacy, William Willison, James Hardway, Luther Besser, John Brewster, Thomas Fitch, Lisa Crouch, Vince Patton, William Preston and Thomas Henderson.

In 1851, the Clark County gold seekers were Charles and William Welch, Roland Baker, Thomas Tomlinson, Sul and William Hackney, Dewitt and Otterbine Woods, Jack Belleu, Ira Mills, Ben Woods, Albert, Elbert and Uncle James Kidwell, Uncle William Stinson and Uncle Robert Downs.

In 1852, they were followed by Samuel Handy, Alex David, Tom Tichenor, James, Sam and William Newlin, Clark and Fred Hammond, Newton Bean, James Downs, John Randall, William Connelly, Sims, Frank and Reuben Walker, John Donelson, Jonathan Gilbert, Calvin Newlin, Adam Biggs and Andy House.

In 1854, Clark County sent John Brown, James Robinson, George and Frank Bartmess, James Towers, Charles, James and John McNary, John Doty, William Duckwall, Henry Baker, Dan Starks, Sam Lowry, Berry Davis and Chesterfield Forsythe.

In 1856, Wyatt Woods, Henry Sherman, George Towell, James and George Turner, John Beverly, Dock and Pete Farrow, Hurley Kester, Sam and William Houghton, William Daughette, James and Lige Parker, Francis, Lyman and Wesley Hammond, Jack Shields and Ward Dudley.

Finally, in 1858, the Rev. Richard Belknap, Dave Daugherty, John Mauk, Jake Anderson, Neal Rogers, James Nichols, Sam and Tom McClure, Albert McMurray, Marshall Lafferty, Dr. Dicks, Fred Peters, Dr. Rhubottom, John Padgett, William Chapman, William Green, Jesse Bryam, James Griffith and James Shealey.

Believe it or not, 13 of these men were still living in 1915 and had a reunion to celebrate their great adventure!

Illinois faced hard times

Abraham Lincoln remained optimist in late 1830s

*Clark, Dorothy

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Historically speaking

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The financial panic that had smashed down upon the nation was still weighing heavy on Illinois when the state legislators met at Vandalia, the capitol of Illinois, to start the session of 1838-39, more than 150 years ago.

One of the discouraged group, Rep. Abraham Lincoln, for example, looked ahead with confidence, but the majority were low in spirit.

The "detonation of breaking banks continued to echo in the air." Work had stopped on the canals and roads, the whole program of internal improvements that had so dazzled the west.

Ruined investors were tearing up worthless certificates of stock in mushroom towns. The state itself faced bankruptcy, its warrants not worth 50 cents on the dollar. Neither its current expenses nor the interest on its gigantic accrued debt could be paid. Currency was scarce, and "wild-cat" bank notes dubious.

What particularly depressed the legislators was the recent decline of 50 percent in the rate of immigration, after it had been so high earlier in the decade. Was it possible that this prairie which had so excited the nation when it had been thrown open to settlement — this great sea of grass — was not to be the paradise they had dreamed?

If there were about 450,000 people in the whole state of Illinois it would mean that the population had only doubled in the decade — and rich land available for only $1.25 an acre!

Legislators also had to face the fact that one out of every 17 citizens over 20 years of age could neither read nor write. Public schools were few and usually substandard, both as to buildings and teaching.

There was little drainage of swamps or marshes on the huge prairies. Flies and mosquitoes bedeviled man and beast. One farmer described them as "so bad the cows would crawl into the smoke and stand almost in the fire kindled by owners to keep them away. Poor horses ran races mightly to be rid of them."

Malaria, chills and ague were common and regarded as inescapable. The "puling complaint" or milk sickness, was a deadly visitor. Doctors warned settlers to plant trees between the house and the slough to catch the malaria in the leaves and not let it get by.

Roads were bad, little more than a widening of the old Indian trails. The sticky prairie soil stuck to the wagon wheels. Grain could not be hauled to market except in late summer or when the ground was frozen in the winter.

Illinois was seventh in the nation in the production of corn, and ninth in wheat, but in the late 1830s grain profits were so low the settlers despaired. Fields of 70-bushel corn to the acre failed to excite farmers who saw no market.

The problem was what to grow. Many farmers caught the "silk culture mania," which had been growing in the East. In 1841, the state of Illinois was paying a bounty of one dollar for every 10 pounds of cocoons raised.

Mulberry trees were planted in rows in several sections of the state, and settlers feverishly dreamed of raising cocoons on the leaves and unwinding untold skeins of silk in their attics. In the four counties nearest Elgin, Ill., it was estimated 100,000 mulberry trees were growing in 1840.

The tomato was little known by the farmers of that time. Some raised it as an ornament, but many settlers destroyed the vines believing they would poison his children and pigs.

Sugar beets were praised by some as superior to corn and hay for cow feed. Other settlers thought it was cheaper to winter horses on carrots or Swedish turnips instead of hay. In 1841 sugar from beets was being produced at Elgin. High hopes were held for hemp as a great prairie crop also.

Crazes for oddities swept the regions where nobody was sure what crops would prove profitable. Nutmeg potatoes (so-called from the Nutmeg State of Connecticut) were guaranteed to ripen in six weeks. Rohan potatoes produced tubers of 6 or 7 pounds and many in a hill. Chinese tree corn was guaranteed to grow practically limitless number of ears per stalk.

Settlers from the South began to experiment with crops of tobacco and cotton.

The 1839 sheep crop in Illinois produced only 1 pound 5 ounces of wool per fleece. Timber wolves and prairie coyotes ate lambs, calves, geese and chickens.

Great flocks of blackbirds joined with crows and squirrels in wrecking newly planted corn crops. In some sections of Illinois the wild pigeons were even more destructive.

Lincoln's confidence in the state of Illinois was fully justified in the years since he served as state representative at Vandalia more than 150 years ago.

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A hardy breed

Hutsonville, Ill., settlers faced many hardships

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At a teachers' meeting in 1896 in Hutsonville, Ill., an essay was read that aroused much attention and interest. Thank goodness a copy survived to reach my desk several years later.

The first white settlers of Hutsonville were the Hutson family. Father Isaac Hutson, an Ohio native, arrived in late winter of 1812, and settled about a mile below what is now Hutsonville.

The War of 1812 was still in progress, and Indians were hostile, but Hutson was brave — at least foolhardy, when we know what happened to his family. A man named Dixon settled near Hutson's log cabin.

One day in April, Hutson went to the mill at Palestine, and didn't reach home until dark. About halfway to his cabin, he noticed an unusual light in that direction.

Fearing something was wrong, he galloped his horse full speed. His worst fears were realized. A prowling band of Indians had murdered his entire family, his wife and six children, the youngest about 16 years old. Then his cabin had been set on fire.

Almost frantic with grief, he rode several times around the ruins, wildly calling out the names of his family.

Dixon's body was found a few rods from the fire, mutilated almost beyond recognition. His breast had been torn open, the heart removed and placed upon a pole planted in the ground nearby.

Hutson left the scene vowing vengeance. He joined the army at Fort Harrison and was afterward killed in a fight with the Indians.

His name is preserved in the town's name and in Hutson Creek, which flowed near his cabin.

The next settler was John Eaton who settled in the southwestern part of the township in 1813.

Following him came the Barlows, Hills, and a number of Newlins. John Newlin arrived there in 1818. Another important early settler was Nathan Musgrave who arrived in 1826.

Later on came the Lowes, Chalkey Draper, and the Guyer family. These pioneers lived a hard life. They feared the panthers, wildcats, wolves and bears.

Deer numbered 50 or 75 in a single herd. It was years before a deer with the hide on would bring 50 cents.

These early settlers were farmers. The first crop of corn was often planted in gashes made in the field with an ax. The first plow was known as the "Cary" plow with a mold board part iron and part wood. They were followed by the much improved "Diamond" plow.

The oldest church organization in the township was a Quaker church. The exact date of its establishment is not known.

The Hutsonville Baptist Church, with a membership of three men and five women, and the Universalist Church, were organized later. When it was decided to build churches, both were built out of town.

Hutsonville was laid out as a village in April 1832 by Robert Harrison. Most of the business houses were built down near the river bank as this was the old state road from Vincennes to Chicago.

A tavern was built on this street by Andrew Harris. The site was marked for many years by a sinkhole in the ground, formerly the tavern cellar, with a few bushes growing out of it.

William Cox built the first residence in the fall of 1832. It fell about 1913. The same year William R. Hurst built his home. It became known as the "Gascon Adams House."

Cox and Hurst were the first merchants and opened a store in August 1832. All early merchants sold only on credit.

The most money made in town was by the Preston Brothers. Other early merchants were Caswell Jones, Henry A. Steel, A.P. Harness, John A. Merrick and Nathan Musgrave.

Pork packing was an early profitable business in Hutsonville. Cox and Hurst began business in 1835. Other firms included Carson & Company, H.A. Steel and John A. Merrick.

The Prestons also did the largest business in pork packing. They built down on the river bank. The house where they boarded their hands stood for many years longer.

Hutsonville once had a distillery built by Merrick and Volk near where the brick and tile factory stood, but it proved to be unsuccessful.

The first school in Hutsonville was taught by a Mr. Brown in a little house on the lot where Ambrose Woolverton lived later. The second school was built in 1855, a two-story frame with an addition in 1883.

The first newspaper in the county was started in Hutsonville in 1852 by George W. Cutler who called it the Wabash Sentinel. Cutler sold out to E. Callahan who changed the name to The Journal.

A year later he sold to a man from Marshall, Ill. In July 1857, the next newspaper was started by W.H. Rubottom and lasted a year.

W.M.P. Springer from Palestine, Ill., started The Hutsonville News, but only published six months.

In 1896 Hutsonville was described as "a pleasant town with about 28 business houses, two factories, and a total population of 800 or 900 persons."